concerned, to do the Bakreswar project on their own. But please do not try to force the Government to make an exception in the policy of bilateral State-to-State credit because it will open a floodgate and we will not be able to then have any policy. And the proposal which I have made for this project—the same formula has been accepted by Andhra, has been accepted by Kerala, has been accepted by Karnataka, has been accepted by Haryana. The formula is that to the extent the State Government willing to invest, we will give additional power. How more fair can we be? This is the approach to Bakreswar. Please find it out for yourself.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: Sir, this is most astonishing. This project was cleared as the only State sector Plan project in the Eighth Plan and the West Bengal Government was advised by the Central Government to explore the sphere of external assistance. That is why they tried and two offers were made—one from Japan and the other from USSR. They accepted the USSR one and it was cleared by the Planning Commission also. Now there is no reason why...

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has made a different point.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: The West Bengal Government having no other option have started it on their own. The self respecting people of West Bengal have accepted the challenge of the Central Government and are determined to complete it on their own if the Central Government does not do this. But what is due to us—the foreign credit allotted to West Bengal—why should they not get it cent per cent? That is the question which the Central Government must answer...

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I have already answered that question. If she cannot understand the reply given so clearly ... Sir, she is all the time astonished. What can I do? She must appreciate and understand the reply? Please understand the reply without being biased. Then you will appreciate it.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: You are cheating the States.

SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY: Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that if the generating capacity, which is now 36% in West Bengal, is increased by 14% more, there would be an additional generation of 360MW of power and there would be no necessity to put up a new power plant in West Bengal?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Sir, new plants should always be there, but the hon. Member is right that if the plant load factor is improved, it will make up a gap of about 300MW. But I would plead with the West Bengal Government and the people, don't politicize this. Collection of blood for a project is a stunt. So much of blood is going waste because it is getting spoiled. Don't do this. It is infected with virus. Don't do this. Have a project: treat it as economic.

MR CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Exploration and production of oil in Assam by a private company

*242. SHRI N.E. BALARAM:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to allot an area in Assam to the Hindustan Oil Exploration

Limited, a private company for exploration and production of oil;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a deviation from the accepted policy of Government in this field; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons to change the policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Pre-budget price rise of TELCO model of vehicles

*246. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a pre-budget price rise of the TELCO model of vehicles by about Rs. 17,000/- from 21st January, 1989;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether there has been a protest from the Truck Owners Association; and

(d) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) and (b) Effective from 21st January 1989 M/s. TELCO Ltd., have increased prices of their truck and bus chassis by Rs. 11,900/ and Rs. 10,800/- respectively.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) There is no statutory price control on automobiles. The price increase effected by the manufacturers is mainly due to the increase in the prices of various inputs required for the manufacture of the vehicles.

Heavy Engineering Corporation, Ranchi

*247. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Process Treatment Plant and Sewage Plant built to clean the dirty water of Heavy Engineering Plant, Ranchi at a cost of about Rs. 20 crore are not working since their inception;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for not commissioning these plants and what steps are being taken for their working; what are their working hours/days per month as at present;

(c) whether it is also a fact that an electric generator has been installed to run these plants and, as reported, the transformer has been missing since long; whether any investigation has been made into it; and

(d) if so, what is the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The transformer of the Process Treatment Plant was damaged in October 1988 due to pilferage. However, the work was managed by using the standby diesel generator. An F.I.R. has been lodged with the Police.

Plant load factor of State Electricity Boards and their accumulated losses

*248. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the improvement or deterioration in the plant load factor of power stations of electricity boards in various States and in the centrally managed power stations during the last one year; and